

REMARKS

Claims 1-4 and 9-16 were pending when last examined. All pending claims are shown in the detailed listing above.

Objections to the Amendments

The Applicants respectfully thank the Examiner for the reminder regarding specific guidelines for the format of the amendments. Applicants have used the proper format in this Response.

Double Patenting

Claims 1, 9, and 13 stand provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 9, and 13 of copending Application No. 09/752,376 in view of Hassett et al., U.S. Patent 6,173,31 B1, and further in view of Adrangi et al., U.S. Patent 6,687,846 B1. Furthermore, Claims 1, 9, and 13 stand rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 7, and 10 of U.S. Patent No. 6,567,813 B1 in view of Hassett et al., U.S. Patent 6,173,311 B1, and further in view of Adrangi et al., U.S. Patent 6,687,846 B1.

Applicants respectfully request that these rejections be held in abeyance until there is an indication that Claims 1, 9, and 13 are otherwise allowable. At that time, Applicants will submit a Terminal Disclaimer to overcome the rejections under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 1-4 and 9-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hassett et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,173,31 B1, and further in view of Adrangi et al., U.S. Patent 6,687,846 B1. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Applicants' independent Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, "providing a collaboration function for supporting a conference wherein a plurality of participants collaborate with each other using respective computers connected over a global-area network."

According to the Examiner, "In the Abstract, Hassett et al. disclose load balancing servers to provide efficient servicing of clients (providing a collaboration function wherein a plurality of participants collaborate with each other using respective computers)." Applicants respectfully disagree. The Abstract of Hassett et al. states:

A server services client requests in an improved manner by a utilizing a combination of sending an id of the last article that has been previously sent to the client, load balancing servers to provide efficient servicing of clients and providing redundant servers so that a failure of any one server does not result in the termination of server services to clients.

From this, it is clear that the Abstract of Hassett et al. does not include any mention of a collaboration function or a plurality of participants collaborating with each other. As such, the portion of Hassett et al. cited by the Examiner most certainly does not teach or suggest, "providing a collaboration function" or "a plurality of participants" which "collaborate with each other using respective computers connected over a global-area network," as recited in Claim 1.

Furthermore, the Examiner admits, "Hassett et al. don't explicitly disclose supporting a conference." But the Examiner asserts, "In column 5, lines 27-40, Adrangi et al. disclose a video conferencing system." Again, the Applicants respectfully disagree.

Adrangi et al. is directed to the distribution of content, not to conferencing. See Abstract. ("A system and method for error handling and recovery in a content distribution system is described...."). The portion of Adrangi et al. cited by the Examiner discloses one such content distribution system—i.e., a "system configured to stream live and on-demand audio/video content." (col. 5, lns. 27-28). Although Adrangi et al. further discloses that one

source for content can be “live signals 1402 provided via video conferencing systems 1411” (col. 5, lns. 33-34), Adrangi et al. does not teach or suggest that users of the system are actually involved in any conference themselves. Quite to the contrary, the end users 1540-1548 only receive content, as suggested by the arrows pointing in only one direction between the various components in Figs. 14-16 of Adrangi et al.

Because neither Hassett et al. nor Adrangi et al. disclose what the Examiner suggests, the rejection of Claim 1 cannot stand. Indeed, these references, taken alone or in combination, simply do not disclose, teach, or suggest any collaboration whatsoever, much less “providing a collaboration function for supporting a conference wherein a plurality of participants collaborate with each other using respective computers connected over a global-area network” as recited in Claim 1. As such, the cited references do not render obvious Applicants’ Claim 1.

Applicants’ Claims 9 and 13 recite, *inter alia*, the same limitation as Claim 1 of “providing a collaboration function for supporting a conference wherein a plurality of participants collaborate with each other using respective computers connected over a global-area network.” Accordingly, the cited references do not render obvious Claims 9 and 13 either.

For at least the reasons discussed above, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1, 9, and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn and these claims be allowed. Furthermore, because each of Claims 2-4, 10-12, and 14-16 depend from one of Claims 1, 9, and 13 and include further limitations, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of these dependent claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) also be withdrawn and the claims be allowed.

CONCLUSION

Should the Examiner wish to discuss the Application, it is requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned at (415) 772-1200.

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